Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this

time, and I thank him for always standing first and foremost for human

rights here and around the world. I am not surprised that he would come

forward with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DeLay) with this well-

deserved and important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more gratifying to the American people

than seeing people vote, and especially people vote for the first time.

I feel what is happening in Iraq with great and moving nostalgia

because it reminds me of the first African Americans who voted after

the Civil War. It reminds me that this is the 40th anniversary of the

Voting Rights Act of 1965 and what it meant for people in Alabama and

Georgia to come to the polls for the first time. There is unanimous

applause for the people of Iraq who risked their lives to come to the

polls. They did not just vote. Many of them knew they were risking life

and limb to vote.

They know, however, and we know where the risk was greatest, and that

risk was greatest on the Armed Forces of the United States and their

allies who made this right possible.

Mr. Speaker, I come forward to say that no people in our country more

appreciate that vote on January 30 than the people in the District of

Columbia. In the District of Columbia, lives were lost for the vote in

Iraq. But these residents are the progeny of 2 centuries of District

residents who have gone to war without a vote. Three of these young men

who were on the frontlines in Iraq came to the House as the House

opened and asked for the same vote for their families and for the

residents of the District of Columbia as their service has given to the

people of Iraq. They asked to start with the Committee of the Whole

where we had the right to vote but the right was taken from us when the

majority changed.

Listen to one of the young men: ``Two of my friends and I earlier

this month asked for the return of the House vote of the Committee of

the Whole our city won during the 103rd Congress . . . Think of what

American leaders and citizens would say if one party were to nullify

the legitimate vote of another party after the elections in Iraq.''

They asked to see the Speaker; the gentlewoman from California (Ms.

Pelosi), leader of the Democrats. She saw him. The Speaker and a member

of his staff were unable to see him. Senator Lieberman and I have

reintroduced the No Taxation Without Representation Act.

Let me leave you with the words, finally, of one of these young men.

``I was prepared in Iraq for whatever came, including service in a

border breach squad charged with clearing mines and anything else that

got in the way to prepare the first troops to cross the border. That

was my duty and I would do it again. However, our country also has an

important obligation to those who serve and to other citizens. One of

the most important obligations is to ensure every citizen that his

representative will have a chance to vote before that citizen goes to

war for his country.''

The third young man: ``My father served in the 101st Airborne in

Vietnam and I am proud to follow him by serving my country in the same

manner. I want equal treatment at home. I want the same voting

representation in the House and Senate as other soldiers and as the

Iraqi people have in their elections this month.''

Out of the mouths of young residents of the District of Columbia who

are on the frontline. I will insert their statements and a statement

concerning their service from the Washington Post in the Record.